

## ITALY

**Date of Elections:** May 7, 1972

### **Reason for Elections**

Elections were held to renew all the members of Parliament, prematurely dissolved by the President of the Republic on February 28, 1972. This dissolution was 16 months early.

### **Characteristics of Parliament**

The Parliament of Italy is bicameral, composed of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate.

The Chamber of Deputies consists of 630 Deputies elected for 5 years.

The Senate consists of 315 elected members, former Presidents of the Republic (presently 3) who are members for life and 5 citizens, appointed by the President of the Republic, who have brought honor to the Nation and who are also members for life. The term of office for Senators is 5 years.

### **Electoral System**

All Italian citizens of either sex at least 21 years of age, registered on the annually updated electoral rolls, and in full possession of their civil rights may vote. Said right may not be limited save on account of civil incapacity in consequence of a penal sentence, or in case of moral unworthiness as established by law.

Voting is compulsory; failure to do so is punishable by law.

A candidate to the Chamber of Deputies must be a voter at least 25 years of age. No Deputy may at the same time be a member of the Senate. He may moreover not hold any private or public function subsidised by the Government or a public agency, nor may he be a judge on the Constitutional Court or a member of the Superior Court of the Judiciary (*Gonsiglio Superiore della Magistratura*).

The list of candidates drafted by political parties must be submitted by the latter to the Ministry of the Interior between the 62nd and 68th day preceding the elections.

For election to the Chamber of Deputies, the country is divided into 32 constituencies. The number of seats allotted to each constituency is proportional to its resident population. In each, Deputies are elected by party-list system with representation determined according to an electoral quotient obtained by

dividing the total number of votes by the number of seats to be filled, plus 2. For the calculation and distribution of the remainder, all the constituencies form a single electoral college.

Electors may express preferential votes by making a mark opposite 3 candidates' names, if there are less than 16 to be elected; or 4, if more than 16. Vote-splitting is prohibited.

Participants in the election of the Senate must be at least 25 years of age; the minimum age for candidates is 40. The office of Senator is incompatible with that of Deputy, and with certain other functions as mentioned in the case of Deputies.

Senators are elected from 20 Regions, as set down in the Constitution. Each Region is accorded a number in proportion to its population, although none has less than 7 except the Val d'Aosta, which has 1.

The number of electoral colleges, in each Region, corresponds to the number of seats to be filled. If, within a college, a candidate obtains at least 65 % of the votes cast, he is elected. In other colleges where this percentage is not attained, the results are distributed on Region-wide scale, according to the same system of proportional representation of seats, with qualified electoral quotient, as used for Deputies.

The " next-in-line " of the list from which the holder had been elected fills any seat which becomes vacant, in either the Chamber of Deputies or the Senate, between general elections.

### General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

Although the official length of the election campaign is 70 days from the deadline for presenting candidatures — in this case March 23, 1972 — the campaign in fact started upon the resignation of the outgoing Government, and was marked by lively competition between the major parties.

For the Chamber of Deputies there were 6,846 candidates appearing on 344 lists presented by 21 parties or political groups. There were, in turn, 1,678 candidates to the Senate.

The 4 parties of the outgoing centre-left coalition — Christian Democrats, Social Democrats, Socialists, and Republicans — no longer presented joint lists or a common programme, but ran separately. The Christian Democrats, desirous of presenting a moderate and coherent image, proposed university and secondary-school reforms, employment opportunities to offset unemployment, especially among the youth, and measures which would give new impetus to economic development. The Social Democrats advocated checking price increases and safeguarding the national currency by means of a vigorous social policy. The Socialists were in favour of decentralized teaching, economic plan-

ning and social reforms, while the Republicans stressed production control and across-the-board redistribution of income.

Three right-wing groups also campaigned. These were the Liberals, faithful to the free-enterprise system and to strict management of public affairs, and the neo-Fascist Italian Socialist Movement (MSI) — Monarchists, who submitted joint lists. These two extreme right-wing groups concentrated their efforts in the least developed regions of the South and in Sicily and advocated the return of the corporate state, with extensive socialization of enterprises and worker participation in profits.

As for the extreme left, the Communist Party pushed for the freedom to strike and full employment, reiterating its intention to come to power via legal means. Two smaller groups, the Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity (PSIUP), founded in 1964, and the more recent *Manifesto*, broke off from the Communists and pictured themselves as revolutionary splinter groups.

Paradoxically, little mention was made throughout the campaign of the divorce legislation which in part had precipitated the election.

On the whole, the elections confirmed the stability of the Italian electorate. Although the Communist Party slightly improved its position, the parties of the extreme left were badly defeated, gathering a mere 2.6 % of the votes and electing no Deputy. The extreme right, on the other hand, made real progress, capturing 5.7 % of the votes in 1968 versus 8.7 % in 1972 and doubling its representation in the Chamber of Deputies.

A more centrist coalition Government than the preceding (the Socialists were replaced by the Liberals) was formed on June 26, 1972, under the leadership of the Christian Democrat Giulio Andreotti.

## Statistics

### 1. *Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the Chamber of Deputies*

Number of registered voters. . . . .	37,039,769
Voters. . . . .	34,491,197 (93.1 %)
Blank or void ballot papers. . . . .	1,106,705
Valid votes. . . . .	33,384,492

Political Group	Votes obtained	%	Number of Seats in the Chamber of Deputies
Christian Democrats (DC)	12,943,675	38.8	267 (+1 )
Communist Party (PCI)	9,085,927	27.2	179 (+2 )
Socialist Party (PSI)	3,209,503	9.6	61 (—30)
Italian Social Movement (MSI) and Dem- ocratic Party of Monarchical Unity (PDIUM)	2,894,789	8.7	56 (+26)
Social Democrat Party (PSDI)	1,716,197	5.1	29 (+29)
Liberal Party (PLI)	1,300,074	3.9	21 (—10)
Republican Party (PRI)	953,681	2.9	14 (+5 )
Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity (PSIUP)	648,368	1.9	- (-23)
<i>Manifesto</i>	223,789	0.7	- (= )
People's Party of South Tyrol	153,759	0.5	3 (= )
Others	228,935	0.7	—
			630

## 2. Distribution of Seats in the Senate

Political Group	Votes obtained		Number of Seats in the Senate
Christian Democrats	11,457,766	38.1	135 (= )
Communist Party	8,565,820	28.4	94 (-7 )
Italian Socialist Party	3,224,778	<b>10.7</b>	33 (—3 )
Italian Social Movement and Democratic Party of Monarchical Unity	2,763,719	9.2	26 (+13)
Social Democrat Party	1,646,780	5.5	11 (+1 )
Liberal Party	1,317,909	4.4	8 (-8 )
Republican Party	917,392	3.0	5 (+3 )
People's Party of South Tyrol	113,392	0.4	2 (= )
Others	33,326	0.1	<b>M+1 )</b>
			315

3. *Distribution of Parliamentarians according to Professional Category*

	Chamber of Deputies	Senate
Lawyers. . . . .	.161	90
Teachers. . . . .	.100	64
Journalists, writers, public relations officers . . . . .	72	30
Salaried clerks. . . . .	57	23
Trade unionists. . . . .	27	14
Civil servants. . . . .	27	9
Doctors. . . . .	27	13
Industrialists. . . . .	26	12
Economists. . . . .	24	11
Workers. . . . .	23	4
Engineers, architects. . . . .	.19	8
Farmers. . . . .	.11	4
Party officials. . . . .	.6	15
Surveyors. . . . .	4	3
Members of the armed forces. . . . .	3	—
Others. . . . .	27	22
No indication of profession. . . . .	.15	—
	629	322

4. *Distribution of Parliamentarians according to Sex*

	Chamber of Deputies	Senate
Men. . . . .	.607	317
Women. . . . .	22	5
	629	322